

Message Text

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11
ACTION EA-09

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FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6019

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PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR CH

SUBJECT: WINTER WHEAT CROP

1. USLO REPRESENTATIVE OBSERVED WINTER WHEAT CROP IN SEVERAL AREAS IN LATE MAY AND EARLY JUNE WHILE ACCOMPANYING THE U.S. WHEAT STUDIES DELEGATION.

2. WHEAT SEEN IN THE NANKING AND SHANGHAI AREAS SHOWED PROMISE OF HIGH YIELDS, THOUGH HARVEST WAS ABOUT A WEEK BEHIND NORMAL. BARLEY HARVEST WAS IN PROGRESS BUT UNDER WET CONDITIONS. RICE TRANSPLANTING WAS DELAYED BECAUSE OF LATE HARVEST AND WET WEATHER.

3. MOST OF WHEAT SEEN IN THE AREA OF SIAN, SHENSI PROVINCE AND SOUTH TO WU-KUNG, THOUGH ALSO A WEEK LATER THAN USUAL, LOOKED QUITE GOOD. YIELDS SHOULD EQUAL OR EXCEED LAST YEAR'S LEVEL. BARLEY HARVEST WAS IN FULL SWING AND UNDER FAIRLY DRY CONDITIONS. INTERPLANTING OF COTTON AND CORN WAS ON SCHEDULE, BUT RICE TRANSPLANTING WAS DELAYED.

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4. WHEAT OBSERVED FROM THE TRAIN IN CENTRAL SHANSI

PROVINCE ENROUTE FROM SIAN TO SHIHCHIACHUANG IN HOPEI PROVINCE WAS NOT NEARLY SO GOOD AS THAT SEEN IN OTHER AREAS AND SHOWED DISTINCT SIGNS OF DROUGHT AND IN-ADEQUATE IRRIGATION. IN MANY PLACES PLANT POPULATIONS WERE LOW AND GROWTH WAS UNEVEN. SOME OF THIS AREA, HOWEVER, IS RATHER LOW YIELDING EVEN UNDER NORMAL WEATHER CONDITIONS.

5. WINTER WHEAT IN THE AREA OF HIHCHIACHUANG WAS WELL GROWN AND HEADS WERE LARGE AND WELL FILLED BUT MATURITY WAS DELAYED ABOUT ONE WEEK. YIELDS SHOULD EQUAL OR EXCEED LAST YEAR'S.

6. MUCH OF THE WHEAT OBSERVED FROM THE TRAIN ENROUTE FROM CHIHCHIANCHUANG TO PEKING LOOKED RATHER POOR. THE SANDY SOILS, WHICH PREDOMINATE THIS AREA, TEND TO HAVE POOR HOLDING CAPACITY FOR BOTH WATER AND FERTILIZER. MOST OF THE CORN AND COTTON CROPS IN THE REGION SHOWED GOOD GROWTH. PERHAPS IRRIGATION HAD BEEN DIVERTED FROM WHEAT TO OTHER CROPS AT TOO EARLY DATE THIS YEAR.

7. SPRING WHEAT IN CHANGCHUN AREA OF KIRIN PROVINCE WAS 12 TO 16 INCHES TALL AND BEGINNING TO HEAD. MATURITY HAD BEEN RETARDED DUE TO THE LATE ARRIVAL OF SPRING. WEATHER AT TIME OF VISIT WAS RAINY AND CLOUDY AND ALL CROPS NEEDED SUNSHINE. LOCAL AUTHORITIES EXPECT WHEAT YIELDS TO BE ABOVE THOSE OF LAST YEAR.

8. THE WHEAT DELEGATION WAS TOLD BY AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION IN PEKING THAT WHEAT YIELDS IN PRC INCREASED 3.6 PERCENT ANNUALLY PRIOR TO 1966 AND HAD INCREASED BTMR PERCENT ANNUALLY SINCE THAT TIME.

9. IN EARLY JUNE USLO TRAVELER TO TIENTSIN REPORTED THAT WHEAT OBSERVED ENROUTE SHOWED DISTINCT SIGNS OF DROUGHT DAMAGE -- THIN STANDS AND UNEVEN GROWTH.

10. USLO STAFF MEMBER WHO TRAVELED BY TRAIN TO TATUNG, SHANSI PROVINCE ON JULY 17 AND 18 REPORTED THAT SPRING WHEAT IN SHANSI SHOWED DEFINITE SIGNS OF DROUGHT. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PLANT POQLATIONS WERE LOW, GROWTH WAS VERY UNEVEN, AND HEADS APPEARED POORLY FILLED. THAT IN HOPEI, WHERE IRRIGATION WAS AVAILABLE, WAS MUCH BETTER.

11. JAPANESE HERE PLACE PRC GRAIN PRODUCTION FOR 1975 AT FOUR TO SIX PERCENT ABOVE 1974 PRODUCTION. THEY ESTIMATE THAT THE 1976 GRAIN PRODUCTION WILL EQUAL THAT OF 1975, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE EARLY RICE CROP WAS

DAMAGED BY BAD WEATHER, THERE WAS SOME DAMAGE TO THE WINTER WHEAT CROP AND 35 TO 40 PERCENT OF THE SPRING WHEAT CROP HAS BEEN DAMAGED.

12. PRESS RELORTS AND USLO OBSERVATIONS REVEAL THAT HARVEST OF WHEAT IN MUCH OF THE WINTER WHEAT AREA WAS DELAYED BY THE LATE ARRIVAL OF SPRING AND FURTHER HAMPERED BY RAINS AT HARVEST TIME. EVIDENTLY, HOWEVER, THERE WAS ENOUGH INTERMITTENT SUNNY WEATHER SO THAT THRESHING AND DRYING OF THE GRAIN WAS ACCOMPLISHED WITH MINIMUM LOSS.

13. AT THIS POINT, WE ESTIMATE THAT THE 1976 WHEAT PRODUCTION WILL BE ABOUT EQUAL TO LAST YEAR'S CROP, WITH WINTER WHEAT PRODUCTION MARGINALLY ABOVE THE PREVIOUS CROP AND THE SPRING WHEAT PRODUCTION SOMEWHAT BELOW.

14. THE COLD WET SPRING IN THE SOUTH AND THE LATE WET WINTER WHEAT AND BARLEY HARVEST IN THE EAST CENTRAL AND NORTH HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO LESS THAN OPTIMUM GROWTH CONDITIONS FOR THE PRC RICE CROP. LATE WHEAT AND BARLEY HARVEST AND LESS THAN NORMAL SUNSHINE IN LATE JUNE AND EARLY JULY HAVE TENDED TO RETARD DEVELOPMENT OF SUMMER GRAINS, SOYBEANS AND COTTON.
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